

## Everything's about you to me by fearofsilence

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**Summary:**

The grass is damp with morning dew. He can feel it soaking into the seat of his jeans, but he stays put despite the cold and the wet and the ache spreading through his skull. Vaguely, he thinks he could be concussed. He doesn't care. For the first time in one week, two days, and an hour and twenty-seven minutes, he's in more physical pain than emotional. And as sick as it is, it feels good.

# Everything's about you to me

## Author's Note:

Day 5: Whump and Angst!

I made a playlist for this one!

Here it is on [Spotify](#) and also [YouTube](#).

Or you could just listen to "Everything" by MUNA on a loop because that's what I did while writing this.

It's also where I got the title.

There's a swingset in the middle of the forest somewhere. Rusted and rickety, with chains that scream and weep when you sit on either of its rubber seats. Moments away from falling apart, from crumbling into dust.

Jonathan and Steve found it one day when they were exploring. Steve thought it was creepy. Jonathan thought it was beautiful; he took a photograph of it with the brand-new camera his mom had saved up all year to give him for Christmas.

That photo still hangs on his wall, right beside the one he'd taken three years later of Steve, one foot on each swing and the brightest of smiles on his face.

~::~~

Jonathan doesn't usually take pictures with his phone. He doesn't like the hollow, lifeless quality of pictures captured with such an easily-accessible camera.

He showed Steve once. He took a picture of his own hand silhouetted by the afternoon sun through his bedroom window – first with his phone camera, and then with his Canon. The first came out flat, grainy, pixelated. The second showed each ray filtered through his fingers, the place where the sunlight bled through thin skin and made it glow red.

"Whatever, man," Steve said dismissively. "I'm not going to lug that

big thing around my neck everywhere I go when I can just whip this sleek little beauty out of my pocket and..." He lifted his new smartphone in front of him and snapped a candid of Jonathan. "...shoot."

Maybe that was part of the problem. Steve wanted everything to be easy.

~::~~

"I can't do this," he'd said.

*I can't do this.* The words Jonathan's heard every morning since, as soon as his mind drags itself out of sleep.

~::~~

Ninety-nine percent of the photos in his phone's camera roll were taken by someone else. Some by Nancy, some by Will.

Most by Steve.

That must be why there's so many of Jonathan himself.

Jonathan drooling on Steve's pillow. Jonathan squinting against the light, hair mussed from sleep. Jonathan pulling a t-shirt over his head. Jonathan with snowflakes clinging to his hair. Jonathan jumping in a freshly-formed puddle. Jonathan floating on his back in Steve's pool. Jonathan laughing around a sip of chocolate milkshake. Jonathan sitting on a curb smoking a cigarette.

There are ones of Steve, too. Most Jonathan is sure he hadn't been the one to take, given the angles.

He hasn't had the heart to delete any of them.

He still spends way too much time scrolling through them all. Way too much time remembering happy moments that feel so tangible until he puts the phone down and realizes they're all gone.

The smell of bacon and maple syrup wafts in through the cracks in Jonathan's bedroom door. He knows his mother will be expecting him to join her and Will for breakfast.

He puts his coat on and sneaks out the back door.

~::~~

The woods used to scare him. Something about the darkness, the unknown, monsters lurking around every corner.

It was Steve who taught him not to be afraid of things he couldn't see.

He thinks maybe it was Steve, too, who taught him to see things that weren't really there.

~::~~

They were drunk. That last night.

It was dark and they were drunk and the ridge was so much narrower than their clumsy legs could handle. When Steve went toppling over the edge, he took Jonathan with him and they rolled down the hill together. They were laughing when they reached the bottom, blissfully unaware of bruised hips and scraped elbows.

"You look so cute with your hair all messy," said Steve and plucked a leaf from behind Jonathan's ear.

He couldn't help it, the words just tumbled out of him like the two of them down the grassy knoll.

"I love you," he breathed.

And Steve kissed him and kissed him and kissed him.

That night, they stumbled back to Steve's empty house and made love and fell asleep with their bodies still twined together. And Jonathan was happy. He thought they both were.

He should've told him he imagined spending the rest of their lives together. He should've told him he wanted to wake up every morning in the same bed and make breakfast for each other and read the newspaper and cut out funny police reports and put them on the fridge so every time they went for milk or eggs they'd see them and remember laughing through mouthfuls of pancake.

He shouldn't have told Steve he loved him. He should've told him he was *in love with him*.

But if three little words were enough to scare him off, he can only imagine what a confession like that would've done.

~::~~

In hindsight, that's how it always was. Him running toward something, while Steve was running away.

~::~~

He's not sure how long he's been walking when he comes upon the swingset. It's exactly where it's always been, of course. He just hadn't realized he'd been heading in that direction.

It's slightly worse for wear than the last time he was here; rusty chains creaking in the breeze. One swing sways a bit, almost as if someone had just left. He snaps a picture before taking a seat on one of the lonely swings and digging a pack of cigarettes he'd pilfered from his mom's carton out of his jacket pocket.

The swingset gives a foreboding shudder under his weight. Jonathan has no time to react before he's falling heavy to the ground. The metal rod that once supported both him and Steve comes swinging down on top of him.

Jonathan just laughs, rubs his sore head, and lights a cigarette anyway.

The grass is damp with morning dew. He can feel it soaking into the seat of his jeans, but he stays put despite the cold and the wet and the ache spreading through his skull. Vaguely, he thinks he could be

concussed. He doesn't care. For the first time in one week, two days, and an hour and twenty-seven minutes, he's in more physical pain than emotional. And as sick as it is, it feels good.

He pulls his phone out of his pocket. For what, he doesn't know. Maybe to call someone to come and pick him up off the ground – in the unlikely case they'd be able to find him, anyway. However, muscle memory has another idea, diverting his thumb to the photo gallery and then he's staring at a picture Nancy must've taken.

Suddenly all these dulled feelings burst back into life.

It's of the two of them – Jonathan and Steve – the day they helped Nancy make cupcakes for the school's bake sale. They'd smoked a joint beforehand and giggled through the whole process and the cupcakes turned out borderline inedible.

It was one of the best days of Jonathan's life.

The picture shows Jonathan, eyes squeezed shut in merriment as Steve holds his face in his hands and licks a stripe of frosting from his cheek. He remembers the moment well. Because right after it was taken, Steve looked at him like it was the first time.

And then he kissed him. And Nancy whistled and cheered.

He's just about to send the picture to Steve when he realizes he can't do that anymore. Because if he does that now, he'll look like a pathetic, desperate, clingy piece of shit who can't move on.

Just as the screen goes dark, the phone begins to vibrate in his hand. Jonathan's chest tightens at the name that flashes up.

He *must* have a concussion because he answers.

He doesn't say anything. He waits for the voice on the other end to speak first.

"Jonathan?" He's sure Steve can hear his ragged exhale. "I think I owe you an explanation."

"Yeah."

“Can you meet me?”

Jonathan nods, though Steve obviously can't see. “I'm at the swingset.”

“I'll be there in ten.”

**Author's Note:**

God am I glad I already have two things written for Day 6 so I can focus on the last day. I just need to decide which one to post (maybe both??)

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